

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please AMEND Claim 26 as follows.

1.-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) An image forming method comprising the steps of:
performing hydrophilic treatment for making a surface of an intermediate transfer body hydrophilic by applying energy to the surface of the intermediate transfer body;
applying a liquid for ~~reducing the fluidity of~~ reacting with an ink on the intermediate transfer body having the surface on which the hydrophilic treatment has been performed;
forming an image by ejecting the ink from an ink jet head on the intermediate transfer body on which the liquid has been applied; and
transferring the image formed on the intermediate transfer body to a recording medium.

27. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, wherein the surface of the intermediate transfer body contains at least one of a fluorine compound and a silicone compound.

28. (Withdrawn) An image forming method according to claim 26, wherein the surface of the intermediate transfer body is formed of an elastic material with a hardness of between 10 and 100 degrees.

29. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, wherein the hydrophilic treatment comprises plasma processing.

30. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, wherein the hydrophilic treatment is additionally performed.

31. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, wherein the liquid contains a component for coagulating a colorant of the ink.

32. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 31, wherein the component comprises metal ions.

33. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, further comprising a step of applying a wettability improving liquid for improving a wettability of the surface of the intermediate transfer body prior to applying the liquid.

34. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, further comprising a step of promoting a removal of water from the ink on the intermediate transfer body prior to transferring the image to the recording medium.

35. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to claim 26, further comprising a step of cleaning the surface of the intermediate transfer body.

36. (Previously Presented) An image forming method comprising the steps of:
performing plasma processing on a surface of an intermediate transfer body to make the surface hydrophilic;

applying a liquid for reacting with an ink on the intermediate transfer body having the surface on which the plasma processing has been performed;

forming an image by ejecting the ink from an ink jet head on the intermediate transfer body on which the liquid has been applied; and

transferring the image formed on the intermediate transfer body to a recording medium.

37. (Previously Presented) An image forming method comprising the steps of:
performing plasma processing on a surface of an intermediate transfer body, the surface containing at least one of fluororubber and silicone rubber, to make the surface hydrophilic;

applying a liquid for coagulating a colorant of ink on the intermediate transfer body having the surface on which the plasma processing has been performed;

forming an image by ejecting ink from an ink jet head on the intermediate transfer body on which the liquid has been applied; and

transferring the image formed on the intermediate transfer body to a recording medium.

38. (Previously Presented) An image forming method comprising the steps of:

applying a liquid for reducing the fluidity of ink on an intermediate transfer body on which hydrophilic treatment of applying energy to the intermediate transfer body to make the intermediate transfer body hydrophilic has been performed;

forming an image by ejecting the ink from an ink jet head on the intermediate transfer body on which the liquid has been applied; and

transferring the image formed on the intermediate transfer body to a recording medium.

39. (Previously Presented) An image forming method comprising the steps of:

applying a liquid for reacting with an ink on an intermediate transfer body on which hydrophilic treatment by plasma processing has been performed;

forming an image by ejecting the ink from an ink jet head on the intermediate transfer body on which the liquid has been applied; and

transferring the image formed on the intermediate transfer body to a recording medium.

40. (Previously Presented) An image forming method according to Claim 39, wherein the surface contains at least one of fluororubber and silicone rubber.

41. (Previously Presented) An image forming method comprising the steps of:
applying a liquid for reacting with ink on an intermediate transfer body on which hydrophilic treatment by application of energy to the intermediate transfer body has been performed;

forming an image by ejecting the ink from an ink jet head on the intermediate transfer body on which the liquid has been applied; and

transferring the image formed on the intermediate transfer body to a recording medium.

42. (Previously Presented) The image forming method according to Claim 41, wherein the intermediate transfer body has a non-ink absorbing surface.

43. (Previously Presented) The image forming method according to Claim 41, wherein the intermediate transfer body has a surface with releasability.

44. (Previously Presented) The image forming method according to Claim 41, wherein the liquid contains a component for coagulating a colorant of the ink.

45. (Previously Presented) The image forming method according to Claim 41, wherein the liquid is applied by a liquid applying roller.